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accomplishing results that would be permanent. It may have lasted as many as forty or fifty years or more; since Nehemiah was a very young man when he first came to Jerusalem, and may have remained there, after his return, to the end of his life. If Nehemiah lived to complete the Books of Nehemiah and of Chronicles, he lived to make record of a registration of Levites which was undertaken as an official act of the reign of Darius Nothus, which included the name of Jaddua, who was high priest in the time of Alexander the Great, and which was completed during the high-priesthood of Jaddua's father Johanan. See Neh. XII., 23, 24. There is nothing incredible in the idea that he may have lived so long as this. The current opinion, I think, is different. It is that the Darius of Neh. XII., 22 is Codomannus, and that this registration was made long after Nehemiah died. But, with all deference to the many eminent scholars who hold this opinion, it is in absolute contradiction with many points in the evidence, and is distinctly untenable.

STUDIES IN ARCHÆOLOGY AND COMPARATIVE RELIGION.

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XIV.

THE IDEA OF REDEMPTION—SECOND ARTICLE.

In concluding what we have to say upon the subject introduced in the last of these studies, we notice a second idea of redemption, under which may be classed quite a different set of phenomena, as touching the views men have held in different ages and climes, and having reference much more than the one before noticed to the future life of the soul. We classify it as

II. THE JUDICIAL IDEA.

It is deserving of notice how much, in respect to what is here intended, the pagan thinker and devotee is sometimes found to be at one with the moralist and the rationalist of our own time, or of any previous one. I speak of that theory of human destiny, as regards the next life, which places man before God, when God is thus recognized at all, in the attitude of a claimant for the divine favor upon a plea of personal merit. *Quantum meruit*—this, we are even now often told, is the only ground upon which, consistently with self-respect, or with fundamental principles of right, man may ask approval and blessing, even of God. In some ancient religions this idea took the form of an actual balancing of the good and the ill in each man's character or life, with destiny decided as the one or the other scale should rise or fall. I call this, in each aspect of it, the judicial idea of redemption; perhaps with sufficient exactness to answer a present purpose.

There is something in man which makes this idea pleasing to him. It may be doubted if any other form of religious error has ever prevailed so widely, or has been able to put itself in such close alliance with certain phases of human culture. One of the forms which it assumes—and it is that which prevails to this day—is seen in a passage in Plato's "Republic." The aged Cephalus, in that part of the dialogue where the passage occurs, is discoursing with Socrates upon themes of this nature. He has just come in from sacrificing in the court of the dwelling where the party are met, in some of those acts of domestic worship cus-

tomary with the Greeks, and his conversation seems to take its tone, in a measure, from this circumstance.

"You know very well, Socrates," says Cephalus, "that when a man believes himself to be near death, fear and anxiety come over him in regard to matters which till now have never entered his mind. The tales told of the life below, setting forth how the man who has here lived sinfully must there suffer punishment, he has always laughed at before, but now his soul is tormented lest they should be true; and whether owing to the weakness of old age, or from being so much nearer to the life below, he seems to see it more distinctly. Thereupon, filled with apprehension and fear, he straightway begins to ponder and to examine whether he has ever injured any man. And he who makes the discovery of many wrongs done to others in his past life, cannot sleep for fear, but is ever starting from his very dreams, as frightened children do, and lives a life of evil foreboding. But to him who is conscious of having done no wrong to others, sweet Hope is ever present, and she is a good nurse in old age."

This he has said in part reply to a question of Socrates, in which he has asked him, "What, to your thinking, is the greatest good that has come to you from the possession of a large fortune?" Replying, now, more directly to this, Cephalus goes on to say:—

"This, then, it is, in respect to which I consider the possession of riches as of most value, not to every man indeed, but to the upright man. For if in departing hence we need have no fear lest at any time unwittingly we have lied or deceived, or lest we may be leaving behind us sacrifices unpaid to God or debts owed to man, it is the possession of riches that has in great measure brought this about. They have, of course, many uses besides, but weighing one against the other, I should none the less, Socrates, set the highest value upon this use of riches, at least to a man of sense."

How forcibly we are reminded, by this, of that saying of our Lord, "Make to yourselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness, that when ye fail on earth they may receive you into everlasting habitations!" In so far as a wise use of wealth may be concerned, even as respects the life to come, the philosophy of the one and the divine lesson of the other might be viewed as saying almost the same thing; yet how wide the difference between what may *enhance* heavenly happiness, and that which is the warrant of a sure hope of *attaining* heavenly happiness at all! I suppose that there are, to-day, more persons in the world, more in Christian America, or Christian England, or any other part of Christendom, more by far, whose hope for eternity is based upon such ideas as these of the old pagan Greek, than of those who rest in any thing that can deserve the name of a Christian faith. So much more acceptable to human pride is it to claim eternal felicity as a *due* than to accept it as a *gift*, though a gift free as the light, to such as do not persist in refusing it!

It is perhaps characteristic of Egyptian ideas in general that, in the ancient religion of that people, this judicial notion of redemption is set forth in a way so literal, and so gross. There was an element of coarseness in that old religion which reveals itself in their worship,—for in some sense it was a worship,—of animals and even reptiles. In their idea of the manner in which final human destiny is settled we see much of the same thing.

"No portion," says Rénouf, "of the Book of the Dead is so generally known as the picture which represents the deceased person standing in the presence of the goddess Maat" [representing, in the trial about to occur, the divine justice], "who is distinguished by an ostrich feather upon her head; she holds a scepter in the one hand, and the symbol of life [a hieroglyphic sign, peculiar in form] in the other. The man's heart, which represents his entire moral nature, is being

weighed in the balance in the presence of Osiris, seated upon his throne as judge of the dead. The second scale contains the image of Maat. Horus is watching the indicator of the balance, and Tehuti, the god of letters, is writing down the result. Forty-two divinities are represented in a line above the balance. These gods correspond to the number of sins which it is their office to punish. It is with reference to these sins, and the virtues to which they are opposed, that the examination of the deceased chiefly consists."

The destiny of the soul, thus under trial, being determined by the preponderance of sins upon the one hand, of virtues on the other. "No one," says Rénouf, "could pass to the blissful dwellings of the dead who had failed at the judgment in the presence of Osiris." This perhaps represents sufficiently what was most central and significant in the ancient Egyptian idea of the manner in which the eternal destinies of souls are decided. Grossly literal as it is, it does not seem to be a very inadequate illustration of what this idea of salvation as a work of human merit alone comes to in the end.

A more poetical setting forth of the idea of redemption, in this phase of it, is found in the *Zend-Avesta*, where Ahura-Mazda, replying to a question of Zarathustra, tells how it is with "one of the faithful" when he "departs this life." At the end of the third night after the soul leaves the body—

"When the dawn appears, it seems to the soul of the faithful one as if it were brought amidst plants and scents; it seems as if a wind were blowing from the region of the south, a sweet-scented wind, sweeter-scented than any other wind in the world. * * * And it seems to him as if his own conscience were advancing to him in that wind, in the shape of a maiden fair, * * * as fair as the fairest things in the world. And the soul of the faithful one, addressing her, asks: 'What maid art thou, who art the fairest maid I have ever seen?' And she, being his own conscience, answers him: 'O thou youth of good thoughts, good words, and good deeds, of good religion, I am thy own conscience. Everybody did love thee for that greatness, goodness, fairness, sweet-scentedness, victorious strength and freedom from sorrow, in which thou dost appear to me. And so thou, O youth of good thoughts, good words, and good deeds, of good religion, didst love me for that greatness, goodness, fairness, sweet-scentedness, victorious strength, and freedom from sorrow, in which I appear to thee.'"

When the soul thus departing is the soul of a wicked person, the maid who meets him, his own conscience, is of fiendish ugliness, and in place of such words of praise and welcome as those just recited, he hears words of upbraiding and doom. Each soul is then led across the *Kinvad* bridge which extends over hell and leads to paradise. "For the souls of the righteous," we are told, the bridge "widens out to the length of nine javelins; for the souls of the wicked it narrows to a thread, and they fall down into hell."

The translator of the *Zend-Avesta*, Mr. Darmstetter, speaks in a note of this bridge as known to many mythologies. It is the *Sirath* bridge of the Mussulman; and "not long ago," he says, "they sang in Yorkshire, England, of the 'Brig o' Dread, na brader thon a thread;' and even now-a-days the peasant in *Nièvre*," a district in France, "tells of a little board," no longer and no broader than a hair of the Holy Virgin, which is placed between the earth and paradise; the good pass it safely, the wicked fall and are lost. So much, at least, in all this, survives of original truth,—that the final destinies of men are apportioned upon principles of justice; while that striking picture in the old Iranian religion of a man's conscience coming to meet him with the signals of his final doom, seems like a trace of some original right conception, still surviving, of that which must be in the next world such a large element of eternal sorrow or eternal joy.

I cannot take space for further expansion under this head. These may per-

haps answer as among the forms,—similar ones might be taken also from the teachings of the Koran,—which what I venture to call the judicial idea of redemption assumes in historical religions.

III. PROPITIATORY.

I go on, now, to the third and last of these phases of the general idea under consideration which I proposed to notice—the *propitiatory*. This can hardly be presented in a form so distinct as those already considered, the ascetic and the judicial. There is no religion besides Judaism and Christianity in which it appears as a characteristic feature, such as we have found in the other two instances. So far as we trace it at all, we must say that it appears as a subordinate element in many, perhaps most of the great historical religions; in some with more, in others with less distinctness. So far as the sacred books of pagan religions are concerned, any search for the clear and unmistakable presence of a propitiatory or expiatory element in the idea of redemption, in any of the forms which that idea assumes, will, I think, be disappointing to most persons. I am free to confess that such has been my own experience. I have been accustomed to think that the *need* of expiation has ever been so elemental in the human consciousness, and so deeply felt even by devotees of paganism itself, as that we may even find in it a reason for many of the most marked characteristics of pagan faith and worship. It is quite possible that a study of pagan *systems*, merely as such, is misleading in this particular. It may be that what is inmost in heathenism itself one might best find out by sitting down with one of its devotees in his own poor hovel, or in a mission bungalow, and encouraging him to speak out his own conception, however densely clouded, of what his hope of salvation, in any sense of that word, may be. It is true, too, that as in the idea of evil, so in the idea of redemption, the higher up we go in prehistoric times, the nearer we come, led by such traces as survive, to what the primitive revelation discloses, of man's need and man's hope. Confession of sin, and prayer for forgiveness, such as I quoted in a former paper, from the oldest Vedic hymns, and from those Akkadian penitential psalms whose date is lost away up in the prehistoric obscurity,—these belong to the utterances of primitive paganism, and are rarely found in those pretentious later books where we have so much more of mystical philosophy, or ascetic ritual, than of what deserves to be called religion. What kind of offering went with those old hymns as sung or chanted by the worshiper, we do not very well know. It is fairly certain, however, that the altar, and the slain beast, and the sacred fire more or less went with them; while in the petition itself, there seems such a resting of the worshiper's whole hope in the mercy of his deity, that it almost seems as if some sense of an expiation, however made, must be in it all.

When we turn, upon the other hand, to those so-called sacred books, in which these religions appear as systems, we perhaps ought not to be surprised that there is so little, upon such a matter as the present one, that we can really learn from them. We ought to look, it may be, for that which we actually so often find,—a mystical philosophy, in which men proud of their wisdom deal with the mysteries of being, with the origin of the world, the nature of God, man's own origin; on all which world-old legends are recited, made up into myths and parables, the only history which the people for whom they were written can have had during centuries. Or, again, so far as these books are ritualistic, they are the work of priesthoods, rarely having any real view to the benefit of the devotee, though very much to the effectual binding-on of the great burdens which every soul of the

millions so enslaved must carry from his birth to his death. So far as they contain moral precepts, they may some of them, in places, approach the excellence of Christian precepts itself, but they still leave the devotee, though ever so earnest in all outward observance, to find his way unhelped through the maze of dogma, and ritual, and law. We need not wonder, therefore, if we find our search for what is more and better than any of these so often without result.

We naturally look, in the various historical religions, to the rite of sacrifice as expressing the idea of expiation. And I think there can be no doubt that in all of them it originally did so, more or less. And then, either sacrifice, in the usual meaning of that word, or offering of some kind, is, so far as I know, common to all religions. It seems to be an element in religion regarded as essential even by savages, in whom the religious idea survives barely in the germ, and in those pantheistic, and so-called atheistic religions, where one might scarcely expect to find any worship or ceremonial of any kind. Brahmanic and Buddhist pantheism, even after they have made God and the universe identical,—all that is seen being but the emanation of the unseen, into which after a time it returns,—and so appear to have dismissed the idea of personal deity altogether,—after all, even such pantheism seems driven by some consciousness that man must be a worshiping being, and that his worship must involve offering and sacrifice, to the introduction of elements which are inconsistent with its own first principles. The Buddhist places in his temple an image of the founder of his faith, and although the person so represented, far from being a god, is not even supposed to have now any conscious existence at all, but to have found that supreme felicity of annihilation to which the devotee himself aspires, still he brings his offering to the shrine, as if even for him there could be no religion without an offering. The Brahman has his own splendid temples, and the country is full of idols, representative of deities supposed to be themselves emanations of that original divinity which is one with the universe. When to these the devotee comes, it is usually, if not always, with an offering.

This conception of an offering to the deity as indispensable to religion is apparently as ineradicable as the idea of God itself. It looks as if there were a providence in this; at all events, a survival in some way made sure, of what must have been more or less clearly revealed to man when the first altar was reared in this world, the first victim laid on the sacrificial wood, and the first sacred fire kindled. Shall we say that not only in all this the one great sacrifice is anticipated, but that it is in this way provided that the devotee of any religion, in any age, in any part of the world, when he shall come to hear of that one offering for sin which really avails, shall be already familiar with the thought of an offering mediating between him who prays and the being to whom prayer is directed?

And then, upon the other hand, it is according to what happens otherwise, when this conception, though it should be innate in the very nature of man, becomes perverted, clouded, corrupted even, until it shall not only have lost well-nigh every trace of what it may have been at the beginning, but is found endorsing enormities even so great as those which were practiced in the temples of Moloch, in Druid groves, or on Aztec *teocallis*. If that idea of God which is certainly an original principle in human nature has undergone such perversion as we know, can we be surprised that this other, relating to an outward act of religion, should be equally so? The universality of the act, however, is all the more significant, for the very reason that, while it assumes so many often grotesque, often even

brutal forms, it still survives, as if endowed with a kind of immortality of its own, even after any correct notion of its meaning has perished.

I think we may say, without straining the point unduly, that in this way at least an idea of expiation is found in all religions. There is shown in the offering,—whatever its nature, and whether it assumes the form of actual sacrifice or not,—there is shown in it a consciousness that, when a soul prays, more is needed than simply the prayer. Let the petitioner have what perverted notion he may of the reason *why* more is needed, and of the *nature* of that more, the fact alone that he is not satisfied to simply pray, implies a consciousness in which survives, however dimly, however in the merest trace of what it once was, the idea of expiation. Perhaps we may say that, when we look at an act of pagan prayer or worship in this way, it is somewhat as the naturalist holds in his hand a lump of petrified clay on which he sees some fossil outline, telling him of a time when some living thing, a bird, a fish, or the leaf of a tree, became imbedded there, and now is found again, ages and æons have rolled away, in these few dim traces which to science mean so much.*

RESULTS OF THE INQUIRY.

Let me now, in as few words as possible, give some results of the inquiry thus far.

1. We find then in the idea of redemption in pagan religions the expression of a sense of need that is apart from, and unsatisfied by, what belongs to the ordinary and common life of men. There is something exceedingly pitiful in what is disclosed to us in the history of religion, in this respect. Perhaps we do not enough think of it. We look at these religions as they reveal themselves to us in their systems, in their worship, in the degrading practices and the degrading superstitions by which they are deformed, in the dishonor they put upon the very name of deity, and the dark and dreadful delusions in which their millions of devotees live and die. After all, there is something besides that. Back of it all is a poor humanity, with its dim yet keen sense of a something in its condition and its prospect more momentous than any of those needs or interests the satisfaction of which so fills and taxes their mortal life, from its beginning to its close. This sense of need is an element in man's nature simply universal. No race is so savage as to be utterly without it; no people so civilized and cultured as to have risen above it or passed beyond it. What a startling mystery of divine providence it seems to be that such millions of millions of human beings have lived and died in this world without any true answer to that cry of the soul!

2. Then, secondly, it is clearly by a kind of instinct that men turn to religion for what shall promise them any satisfaction of this felt need. We often speak of man as a religious being. Do we always realize what that means? It is not simply that man is, in his very nature, conscious of that which he represents to himself in his idea of God; nor simply a predisposition toward worship of some

* Prof. W. G. Blackie, of the University of Edinburgh, describing, in the fourth volume of his *Homer and the Iliad*, the sacrifice by means of which, in Book I. of the great poem, the Greeks seek to appease offended Apollo, says: "With regard to the significance of the religious act in the present case, it was evidently a sacrifice of atonement on account of sins committed against the gods, in order to propitiate their favor and avert their wrath. The Jewish idea of vicarious substitution does not appear in Homer; but there is a voluntary giving up to the god of what was most valuable to the possessor,—viz., his flocks and herds,—as a symbolical reparation for the offense committed by the mortal in contravention of the divine law." The idea of propitiation is here involved, but not in any sense strictly analogous to the Christian one. In the prayer of the priest Chryses himself (*Iliad* I., 39-42), it becomes clear that, in offerings to the deity, the hope of favor rested on the acceptableness of the gift, and upon the pleased approval of the god as thus secured.

being who to him shall *be* God. It is that he cannot live *without* religion. An utterly irreligious and godless man is an anomaly in the history of his kind. He may be the strange product of a civilization that hardens in the same process by which it refines. He may be one who is doing violence to his own nature, and killing in the garden of his soul the most precious growth there. He can never represent to us the man whom God made, who is conscious, even in his worst state, of the fact that his religion ought to help him when all other help fails.

3. But, thirdly, at no point in the study of the religions of paganism are we more impressed with their failure as religions, than here where the test of their real value actually lies. Whether in the long, sad history of those races to whom no gospel of salvation ever came, there may have been some, serious, sincere souls, using to their best ability the light they had, and according to their knowledge exercising faith, of whom we may hope that in the great mercy of God they were saved—this we cannot know. It is a speculation, at the best. But this we *must* say, that if there have been such, they attained to that salvable condition, by going, perhaps with help of the divine Spirit, far beyond all that their pagan faith taught them. The holy God and sinful man never can have come into any such relation as redemption implies, through any system of ascetic practice, by any processes of acquired merit, or by propitiatory offerings to gods who were the creatures of diseased human fancy.

4. And now, as the final point, let us ask what it is in Christianity that makes it so infinitely superior, as a redemptive system, to all other religions of the world. I know not how we shall answer this question otherwise than to say that Christianity provides a *Redeemer*. The fatal defect in all these other religions is that it is humanity, dealing unaided with facts in its own condition even the nature of which it does not rightly understand. Just this circumstance alone, that the teachers of these religions offer to human faith such a multitude of expedients to the end desired, is sufficient proof that what they have to propose is in no case more than groping conjecture. Yet I am not sure but they have done all toward solving the momentous problem that man-made religions can ever do. When Jesus appeared on the scene, the question, How shall a sinful man be saved?—even the question, How shall burdened and sorrowing, and despairing humanity find real comfort, of any kind, in religion?—these questions were still unanswered for the great mass of mankind. Not even had philosophy answered them, much less religion, save as the answer Jesus was to give had already been anticipated in the dispensation that prepared his way. Well might *he* be called “The Desire of all Nations.” Well might those mysterious “wise men from the east” bring to him in his manger-cradle their gold, frankincense, and myrrh. The great name given to him, “Immanuel, God with us,”—that was the key to the infinite difficulty with which founders of religions and of philosophy had struggled for thousands of years:—even more the name “Jesus, for he shall save his people from their sins.” Here was redemption, because here was a Redeemer.

Other subjects contemplated in these studies are “The Idea of Incarnation,” “The Idea of a Future Life,” “The Ethical Value of Pagan Religions,” and “Their Influence in the History of Civilization.” The writer cannot venture to claim for these the needed space in the *STUDENT*, or to tax further the patience of its editor or its readers.